STUDENT COMPOSER CONCERT #1

New works by composers from the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music

Tuesday, October 15 @ 7:00pm
Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building
University of Toronto

Programme

Serenade for Winds, Cello and Double Bass

Evan Tanovich (b.2000)

Evan Tanovich - conductor
Michelle Hui - flute
Nerses Amirkhanyan - flute
Luca Ortolani - oboe
Jason Halliday - oboe
Tommaso Masnari - clarinet
Adriana Jankovic - clarinet
Eric Belanger - bassoon
Ryan Ghassemi - bassoon
Else Sather - cello
Hannah Godfrey-Clarke - double bass

I Dreamed of Spring

Kevin Zi-Xiao He (b.1991)

Erick Oliver Wawrzkiewicz - violin
Anastasia Kulikova - piano

Old Tales

Qiushi Jiang (b.1991)

Christian Le - guitar

e420 from The Art of Mathematical Constants

Ian Ching-Hei Chan (b. 2001)

Jordana Kleiner - flute
Ching-Hei Chan - piano - primo
Murong Bao - piano - secondo

The Sweet Ground
Erik Kreem (b. 2001)

i. Dreams
ii. Ardella
iii. God

Jordana Goddard - soprano
Erik Kreem - piano

String Quartet No. 2 "Depression"
Yilun Liu (b. 1996)

Ryan Shen - violin I
Joanna Gorska - violin II
Vena Lin - viola
Chris Chan - cello

Stars
Kai Leung (b.1998)

Concreamus - Kai Leung - conductor

Sous l'abside du ciel d'été
Benjamin Gabbay (b. 1995)

Benjamin Gabbay - conductor
Claire Latosinsky - soprano I
Abigail Sinclair, Sarah Mole - soprano II
Elizabeth Legiersky, Francesca Hauser - alto
Nathan Gritter - tenor
Kai Leung, Ricardo Ferro - baritone
Dante Mullin Santone, Nicholas Wanstall - bass

*****PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR CELL PHONE IS EITHER TURNED OFF, OR IN AIRPLANE MODE. EVEN IN VIBRATE/SILENT MODE, OUR MICROPHONES CAN PICK UP THE SIGNALS OF INCOMING CALLS, TEXTS, AND SO ON. THIS CAN RUIN RECORDINGS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION*****

PROGRAMME NOTES

Serenade for Winds, Cello and Double Bass

Serenade for Winds, Cello and Double Bass is a single movement study of classical form and 20th-century harmony. The piece has two contrasting themes that are developed in a way that resembles Beethoven's 6th symphony, as well as other classical masterpieces. The piece ends with a fugue that is based on the opening theme. The instrumentation, while uncommon, was used by Dvorak in his Opus 44, which was another influence. The piece originally started as a March, but evolved and incorporated elements a Furiant, a dynamic Czech folk dance.

Evan Tanovich is a 19-year old composer, conductor and pianist from Windsor, Ontario. Evan has been composing for 5 years. He studied with Dr. Paul McIntyre in 2017/18, Larysa Kuzmenko 2018/19 and currently studies with Alexander Rapoport. Evan's works have been premiered across Ontario by professional, community and student groups. In 2018, his 'Reflection for String Quartet' was featured alongside an interview with Michael Enright on CBC Radio's The Sunday Edition. His piece titled 'Letter of Laura Secord 1841' was commissioned and performed by Orchestra Breva for its cross-province tour, commemorating the Sesquicentennial of Canadian war hero, Laura Secord. Evan was selected by the Muskoka Concert band, in partnership with the Canadian Music Center, to be their 'Composer Fellow' for the 2019/2020 season. Most recently, he was commissioned by the City of Windsor to write a Choral piece titled 'A Universal Prayer for Peace' which was performed at a Canada Culture Day on September 28th, 2019. Evan is in the second year of his undergraduate music composition degree at the University of Toronto and is majoring in Political Science.

I Dreamed of Spring

"I Dreamed of Spring" (2019) is Kevin Zi-Xiao He's first work for the instrumentation of violin and piano. Inspired by his favourite jazz pianist Bill Evans, whose life mission, in his own words, was to "search only for truth and beauty", the composer sought to free himself from his own intellectual concerns and insecurities, and just let the piece flow where his heart takes him. A marriage between romantic and jazz vocabularies, the piece depicts one's acute desires and longing for spring - the time of hope and beauty, as a symbol for the never ending searching and yearning for the ideals in life within us all.

Born in 1991 in China, **Kevin Zi-Xiao He** immigrated to Canada in his mid-teen years. Rooted in a Chinese cultural background with influence of a variety of musical traditions , He has studied with renowned figures such as Gary Kulesha, Norbert Palej, Ken Ueno and Andrew List. His works have been showcased in international new music festivals in Asia and Europe. Commissioned by the Meraki Chamber Players, He composed part of the group's "Kandinsky Project", which received multiple public performances in New York City between 2016 and 2017 . In August 2016 , his flute duo "Torn" was showcased in the 44th annual American National Flute Association Convention in San Diego. In his base-city Toronto, He's works have been performed by the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Chinese Artists Society of Toronto (CAST). Holding an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree with double-majoring in music and architectural design, He is currently pursu ing a doctoral degree in composition at the University of Toronto under supervision of Dr. Christos Hatzis . www.hezixiao.com

Old Tales

Written for solo guitar, Old Tales depicts the scene where a grandfather sits by a campfire with his grandchildren and tells stories from the past. This piece is my attempt to explore different ways to compose for guitar. The goal is to have a piece that feels natural on

the instrument and is enjoyable for both the listeners and the performer.

Qiushi Jiang is a composition student who recently started his study at UofT music this fall. Before joining the program, Qiushi has been working as a freelance composer writing music for games since 2008. Most of the projects he worked on are published and sold on online stores such as Steam and Apple App Store. In the past two years, he started taking composition lessons from composer Roydon Tse, a UofT alumnus. The lessons with Roydon eventually lead Qiushi deciding to pursue more formal training at UofT music.

"e420" from The Art of Mathematical Constants

"e420", composed for flute and piano four hands, is one of the three pieces from the woodwind chamber music collection The Art of Mathematical Constants. The other two, "π511" and "Φ220", feature Bb clarinet and bassoon respectively. As reflected by the title, "e420" is intended to be exactly 4 minutes and 20 seconds long.

The flute part, if transcribed to simplified notation system without the pickup note according to the implied tonality of each respective section, would be exactly the first 420 decimal places of the famous Euler's constant ("e") in the world of mathematics under the following circumstances – all zeros in the mathematical constant being ignored, and accidentals being applied to certain pitches for a better melodic contour. Under a similar principle, the pickup note itself corresponds to the digit "2" before the decimal point.

Meanwhile, the piano accompaniment played by four hands provides the harmonic framework for the entire piece to suggest the key of E as the overall central tonality, without showing a strong inclination towards any particular mode.

Ching-Hei Chan, known by his preferred name Ian Chan, is a pianist-composer currently enrolled in the faculty of music at the University of Toronto as a first-year undergraduate. Apart from his curricular duties, he is also involved in composing for Concreamus, a mixed choir at the institute which has been eager to promote choral music written by student composers. Previously, he was a pupil of Canadian composer Kevin Lau, who has been a guest lecturer at the University of Toronto for four years.

During Chan's studies in Unionville High School as a piano major in the Arts Unionville program from 2015 to 2019, he had been actively participating in student composition commissions and productions. In collaboration with Flato Markham Theatre, he premiered his original works such as Cané and Talehot (by himself on the piano) and The Empire of Vampires (with the Unionville High School Wind Ensemble).

Having devoted himself to Protestantism, he also ardently serves as a composer, lyricist and keyboardist in his church (Markham Peoples Community Church). Current projects include his first hymn song album as well as his upcoming religious comedy production in December (What Is Me?), in which he is in charge of composing its background soundtracks and theme song as the music director.

The Sweet Ground

The Sweet Ground is a song cycle consisting of three settings of short poems by the 20th century American poet Langston Hughes, which, though contrasting in their explicit subject matter, all share a fundamental theme: the value of human life and the beauty of existence. Though best known as an intellectual and artistic leader of the Harlem Renaissance, Hughes' work often transcends the political and social debate of his time to say something truly meaningful about humanity at large. The song cycle, with an artistic focus on the inexplicable beauty of life, unifies three such universal poems: Dreams, on the importance of fantasy, reverie, and sublimity as elements of the human experience; Ardella, on the presence of small, easily-

overlooked beauties that can give deep value to something seemingly worthless; and God, on the beauty of love, and humankind's fortune that we may experience it.

Erik Kreem is tremendously excited to commence his studies at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music, studying composition under Professor Norbert Palej. A pianist, cellist and aspiring conductor, his artistic influences include everything from film and video game scores to the great Romantic masters to the music of his Estonian roots. He has worked with such ensembles as Continuum Contemporary Music; the Cantabile Chamber Singers; and the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra, with whom he will continue to collaborate in their 2019-20 season in the position of Apprentice Conductor. Erik's accolades include Continuum's 2018 Toronto Teen Composer Award, as well as first place and special-award wins at competitions such as Markham's International Music Festival & Competition and Toronto's Kiwanis Festival.

When he is not composing, performing or practicing, Erik can be found on the tennis court, at a chess board, or with his nose deep in a mathematics paper.

String Quartet No. 2 "Depression"

Having depression is a never-ending battle, the constant wrestling between optimistic thoughts and pessimistic thinking. It is an agonizing experience, especially when people do not understand, throwing words of "motivation" carelessly. In this piece of music, I attempt to depict and capture such struggle and isolation, using different colors and textures to present each type of emotion that one would experience

Graduated from the University of Toronto earlier this year, **Yilun Liu** is a chamber and orchestral music composer who embraces tradition. Yilun Liu specializes in music theory and counterpoint and has been a senoir lecturer teaching music in the Clearview Art School for over two years. He recently composed the score for the short film Brown Paper Bag that was premiered in 2017. Yilun Liu is currently completing his master's program under the guidance of Gary Kulesha.

Stars

Stars is a setting of a poem by late romantic Canadian poet Marjorie Pickthall. The piece is in three sections and is based, on both micro and macro level, on the motion from unison to harmony and back to unison

Kai Leung is a fourth-year undergraduate student at the University of Toronto studying voice and composition. Kai currently studies composition with Roger Bergs and has studied in the past with Larysa Kuzmenko and Alexander Rapoport. His works have been performed by the Vancouver Chamber Choir, Resonance Youth Choir, Mississauga Tranzit, The St. Clements 11:00 choir, and the Mississauga Summer Chorale.

Sous l'abside du ciel d'été

The poetry of Léon-Paul Fargue (1876-1947), though not well known besides those poems set by Erik Satie, has a distinct quality—a kind of beautiful nonchalance and a refined simplicity that enticed me to set his "Romance" (1919). Musically, my setting draws on the dance-like counterpoint and colourful word-painting habits of the Renaissance madrigal, as well as the sweet airs of strophic folk song, hence my designation of this small-ensemble a cappella work as a "chanson-madrigal."

Benjamin Gabbay (ARCT, piano) is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto in the Bachelor of Music in Composition Program, studying composition under Dr. Roger Bergs.

Benjamin's compositions have received recognition by Toronto's St. James Cathedral (winner, 2018-2019 composition competition), the Amadeus Choir International Seasonal Song-Writing Competition (honourable mention, 2015) and the Ruth Watson Henderson Choral Competition (honourable mention, 2017). He has written works for the Mississauga Summer Chorale (Requiem l'homme armé, 2018)

and Musicata choir in Hamilton (Prelude to Winter, to be premiered in December with accordionist Michael Bridge). Through U of T, he has been the recipient of the Susan Cale Award (2017), the Robert and John Elliot McBroom Scholarship (2017, 2018, 2019), the Lobodowsky Choral Scholarship (2018), and the Gwendolen M. Grant Music Scholarship (2019).

Benjamin also leads the music at an evening worship service at Jubilee United Church.

www.benjamingabbay.com

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We would also like to thank Peter Olsen for recording our music and making it sound beautiful.

Please join us for Student Composer Concert #2 – Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 7:00pm in Walter Hall.

UofT Composers